United States District Court
Northern District of California

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

ANTWION R. JONES,

Plaintiff,

v.

P. LAM, et al.,

Defendants.

Case No. 19-cv-01602-TSH

ORDER OF SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Antwion Jones, an inmate at Correctional Training Facility – Central ("CTF") in Soledad, California, has filed this *pro se* civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging that Defendants were deliberately indifferent to his serious medical needs. Jones has been granted leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* in a separate order. His complaint (ECF No. 1) is now before the Court for review under 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.

DISCUSSION

A. Standard of Review

A federal court must engage in a preliminary screening of any case in which a prisoner seeks redress from a governmental entity, or from an officer or an employee of a governmental entity. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). In its review, the Court must identify any cognizable claims, and dismiss any claims which are frivolous, malicious, fail to state a claim upon which relief may be

granted, or seek monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b) (1), (2). *Pro se* pleadings must be liberally construed. *Balistreri v. Pacifica Police Dep't*, 901 F.2d 696, 699 (9th Cir. 1990).

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a)(2) requires only "a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief." Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(a)(2). "Specific facts are not necessary; the statement need only 'give the defendant fair notice of what the . . . . claim is and the grounds upon which it rests.'" *Erickson v. Pardus*, 551 U.S. 89, 93 (2007) (citations omitted). "[A] plaintiff's obligation to provide the 'grounds' of his 'entitle[ment] to relief' requires more than labels and conclusions, and a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not do. . . . Factual allegations must be enough to raise a right to relief above the speculative level." *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007) (citations omitted). A complaint must proffer "enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face." *Id.* at 570.

To state a claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege two elements: (1) that a right secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States was violated; and (2) that the violation was committed by a person acting under the color of state law. *West v. Atkins*, 487 U.S. 42, 48 (1988).

B. Complaint

The complaint makes the following allegations. On September 19, 2017, Plaintiff had surgery on the middle finger of his left hand. Approximately a week later, Jones's finger became infected. Jones's surgeon, outside doctor T. Zewert was informed, but Dr. Zewert assured Jones that there was no infection. On October 12, 2017, Jones was seen by Dr. Zewert for a "pin removal," at which time Jones discovered that his finger was infected. In order to eliminate the infection, part of Jones's finger was surgically removed. Following the surgery, Dr. Zewert assured Jones that he would send a note to Jones's primary care physician, CTF doctor P. Lam, recommending physical therapy so that Jones could regain range of motion in his finger. In Jones's subsequent follow-up medical visits with Dr. Lam, Dr. Lam repeatedly denied Jones's requests for physical therapy, citing cost-effectiveness, even though Jones was unable to perform daily activities. Dkt. No. 1 ("Compl.") at 9–10. CTF doctor Posson also denied Jones's post-

surgery requests for physical therapy. Compl. at 9. The failure to provide Jones with physical therapy resulted in Jones losing feeling and mobility in his finger. Compl. at 10.

C. Legal Claim

Liberally construed, Jones's allegation that Defendants Zewert, Lam, and Posson deliberately refused to provide the appropriate medical treatment for his finger states a cognizable Eighth Amendment claim. Deliberate indifference to a prisoner's serious medical needs violates the Eighth Amendment's proscription against cruel and unusual punishment. *See Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. 97, 104 (1976). A determination of "deliberate indifference" involves an examination of two elements: the seriousness of the prisoner's medical need and the nature of the defendant's response to that need. *See McGuckin v. Smith*, 974 F.2d 1050, 1059 (9th Cir. 1992), *overruled in part on other grounds by WMX Technologies, Inc. v. Miller*, 104 F.3d 1133, 1136 (9th Cir. 1997) (en banc). A "serious" medical need exists if the failure to treat a prisoner's condition could result in further significant injury or the "unnecessary and wanton infliction of pain." *Id.* (citing *Estelle*, 429 U.S. at 104). A prison official is deliberately indifferent if he knows that a prisoner faces a substantial risk of serious harm and disregards that risk by failing to take reasonable steps to abate it. *Farmer v. Brennan*, 511 U.S. 825, 837 (1994).

CONCLUSION

1. The complaint's allegation that Dr. P. Lam, Dr. S. Posson, and Dr. T. Zewert were deliberately indifferent to Jones's serious medical need and thereby caused him further injury states a cognizable Eighth Amendment claim.

2. The Clerk shall issue summons and the United States Marshal shall serve, without prepayment of fees, a copy of the complaint with all attachments thereto, and a copy of this order upon defendants **Dr. P. Lam and Dr. S. Posson** at **Correctional Training Facility – Central, at Soledad Prison Road, Soledad CA**, and upon defendant **Dr. T. Zewert** at **337 El Dorado Street, #A1, Monterey CA 93940**.

A courtesy copy of the complaint with attachments and this order shall also be mailed to the California Attorney General's Office.

3. In order to expedite the resolution of this case, the Court orders as follows:

a. No later than 91 days from the date this Order is filed, Defendants must file and serve a motion for summary judgment or other dispositive motion, or a motion to stay as indicated above. If Defendants are of the opinion that this case cannot be resolved by summary judgment, Defendants must so inform the Court prior to the date the motion is due. A motion for summary judgment also must be accompanied by a *Rand* notice so that Plaintiff will have fair, timely, and adequate notice of what is required of him in order to oppose the motion. *Woods v. Carey*, 684 F.3d 934, 939 (9th Cir. 2012) (notice requirement set out in *Rand v. Rowland*, 154 F.3d 952 (9th Cir. 1998), must be served concurrently with motion for summary judgment). A motion to dismiss for failure to exhaust available administrative remedies similarly must be accompanied by a *Wyatt* notice. *Stratton v. Buck*, 697 F.3d 1004, 1008 (9th Cir. 2012).

b. Plaintiff's opposition to the summary judgment or other dispositive motion must be filed with the Court and served upon Defendants no later than 28 days from the date the motion is filed. Plaintiff must bear in mind the notice and warning regarding summary judgment provided later in this order as he prepares his opposition to any motion for summary judgment. Plaintiff also must bear in mind the notice and warning regarding motions to dismiss for non-exhaustion provided later in this order as he prepares his opposition to any motion to dismiss.

c. Defendants shall file a reply brief no later than 14 days after the date the opposition is filed. The motion shall be deemed submitted as of the date the reply brief is due. No hearing will be held on the motion.

4. Plaintiff is advised that a motion for summary judgment under Rule 56 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure will, if granted, end your case. Rule 56 tells you what you must do in order to oppose a motion for summary judgment. Generally, summary judgment must be granted when there is no genuine issue of material fact – that is, if there is no real dispute about any fact that would affect the result of your case, the party who asked for summary judgment is entitled to judgment as a matter of law, which will end your case. When a party you are suing makes a motion for summary judgment that is properly supported by declarations (or other sworn testimony), you cannot simply rely on what your complaint says. Instead, you must set out specific facts in declarations, depositions, answers to interrogatories, or authenticated documents, as provided in Rule 56(c), that contradict the facts shown in the defendants' declarations and

documents and show that there is a genuine issue of material fact for trial. If you do not submit your own evidence in opposition, summary judgment, if appropriate, may be entered against you. If summary judgment is granted, your case will be dismissed and there will be no trial. *Rand v. Rowland*, 154 F.3d 952, 962–63 (9th Cir. 1998) (en banc) (App. A).

Plaintiff also is advised that a motion to dismiss for failure to exhaust available administrative remedies under 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a) will, if granted, end your case, albeit without prejudice. You must "develop a record" and present it in your opposition in order to dispute any "factual record" presented by defendants in their motion to dismiss. *Wyatt v. Terhune*, 315 F.3d 1108, 1120 n.14 (9th Cir. 2003).

(The *Rand* and *Wyatt* notices above do not excuse Defendants' obligation to serve said notices again concurrently with motions to dismiss for failure to exhaust available administrative remedies and motions for summary judgment. *Woods*, 684 F.3d at 939).

5. All communications by Plaintiff with the Court must be served on Defendants' counsel by mailing a true copy of the document to Defendants' counsel. The Court may disregard any document which a party files but fails to send a copy of to his opponent. Until a defendant's counsel has been designated, Plaintiff may mail a true copy of the document directly to defendants, but once a defendant is represented by counsel, all documents must be mailed to counsel rather than directly to that defendant.

6. Discovery may be taken in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. No further court order under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30(a)(2) or Local Rule 16 is required before the parties may conduct discovery.

7. Plaintiff is responsible for prosecuting this case. Plaintiff must promptly keep the Court informed of any change of address and must comply with the Court's orders in a timely fashion. Failure to do so may result in the dismissal of this action for failure to prosecute pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b). Plaintiff must file a notice of change of address in every pending case every time he is moved to a new facility.

8. Any motion for an extension of time must be filed no later than the deadline sought to be extended and must be accompanied by a showing of good cause.

9. Plaintiff is cautioned that he must include the case name and case number for this case on any document he submits to the Court for consideration in this case.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: May 1, 2019

THOMAS S. HIXSON
United States Magistrate Judge

United States District Court
Northern District of California